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cation to a foreign power; and my fortune or possessions by draining my private purse and those of my friends in order to elude, frustrate, and, if possible, destroy the nefarious schemes of the revolutionists.

The exalted station of your Excellency bears with it a sublimely honorable character, and under this supposition I have given you my confidence as a means to save your country, in the full persuasion that, after this letter has been translated, attested, and placed in cipher in the archives, it will be destroyed in the presence of the bearer, and that in the report which your Excellency may make to your court on this matter, you will see that my name is not divulged to the British, French, and American governments.

Through the instrumentality of suitable agents I have arranged to expend the sum of 85,000 pesos in shattering the plans and destroying the union and harmony among the bandits now being enrolled along the Ohio, and 36,000 in the discretionary despatch of supplies and counter-revolutionists, which sums<sup>1</sup> I trust will be reimbursed to the bearer, for whose safe return I ask your Excellency to furnish a suitable escort as far as the immediate neighborhood of Natchitoches. I trust, also, that I may confide fully in your Excellency's sense of justice, so that in case Providence spares my life and enables me to rout the bandits destined against Mexico, you will regard as fair and equitable the reimbursement of whatever other outlays I may have to make in upholding the common cause of good government, order, and humanity.

I have the honor to be, most excellent sir, with profound respect,  
your Excellency's most obedient and humble, although unknown servant,

(Signed) JAMES WILKINSON.

To his Excellency, the Viceroy of the kingdom of Mexico and territory annexed.

5. *A Letter of Admiral Farragut, 1853.*

AMONG the Draper Manuscripts in the library of the Wisconsin Historical Society there is a letter (press-mark, 6 xx 60) by David

<sup>1</sup> Whether or not these statements of Wilkinson are absolutely false, and the whole affair is accordingly a brazen swindle, must remain undetermined for the present. In the absence of better evidence, however, the affirmative view receives considerable support, first, from the well-known duplicity of Wilkinson in connection with the Burr conspiracy, and secondly, from the assertions in his *Memoirs*, II. 326-327, that he did not appreciate how serious the projects of Burr had become, and hence that he had not made elaborate preparations to forestall them, until November 6 (eleven days only before the above letter to the viceroy was written), when a letter of warning reached him from James L. Donaldson, of Natchez. He says: "notwithstanding the communications of Swartwout, my mind was not entirely satisfied, and I could not give full credit to his information. But this letter of Mr. Donaldson removed my doubts; and I lost not a moment, after the receipt of it, to put in operation all the means I commanded, for repelling the formidable force, which I now expected would soon be before New Orleans; to which capital my eyes were immediately directed." Again: "I had not formed a decided opinion, of the nature and objects of Burr's enterprise, before the receipt of Mr. Donaldson's letter. . . . I then first perceived, it was wholly unauthorised by the government: — highly criminal in the design, — most alarming in its extent. . . . I had no longer any difficulty, as to the course of conduct, my duty, and the interests of the nation, required me to pursue."

Glasgow Farragut, which merits publication. It was written by Farragut, then a commander, in reply to queries which had been put to him by Dr. Lyman C. Draper, who was seeking far and wide for information relative to pioneer life in Kentucky and Tennessee. In this document Farragut gives some interesting information concerning his father and his own early years that has not appeared in any of the biographies.

In reading the letter it will be helpful, by way of introduction, to remember that the admiral's father, George Farragut, was a Spaniard, coming of a long line of soldiers, sailors, and magistrates, and was born on the island of Minorca in 1755. In a spirit of adventure he came to America in 1776, and served the American cause in the Revolutionary War, both in the navy and as a cavalry major in Tennessee. He settled in Tennessee as a farmer, and married Elizabeth Shine, a Scotch woman of North Carolina. To them was born July 5, 1801, David Glasgow. Later the Farraguts moved to Louisiana, where Major Farragut became attached to the New Orleans naval station. Mrs. Farragut died of yellow fever in 1808.

Young David was but nine years old when appointed a midshipman in the navy, under the tutelage of Commodore Porter; and his memory of still earlier childhood days in Tennessee, as shown in this letter, gives additional evidence of precocity.

R. G. THWAITES.

DAVID G. FARRAGUT TO DR. LYMAN C. DRAPER.

NORFOLK VA

Sept 20<sup>th</sup> 1853

*Dear Sir*

Your note has been received and it would give me great pleasure to comply with your request if it was in my power, but I really know so little of my Father's history that it would scarcely aid you in your object, I only remember my Father in Tennessee as a Farmer and a Soldier I supposed he was a Militia dragoon, because altho only five years old I remember his dragoon Cask with white horse hair in the crest. You may think it strange that I remember that fact, so I'll say why, on one occasion our house was surrounded by some stragling Indians so soon as they were discovered at a distance my Mother put the children in the loft of the log kitchen that stood at a short distance from the house, and when the Indians approached she held a parley with them from the *house*, no doubt to *draw* them from the *kitchen* We lay there all breathless until released by our Mother, during the parley she was once induced to come down to the door, which was secured by a strong Bar and chain, to give them some whisky, as they said they would go away if she would give them some, but as she attempted to open the door a little, one of them struck at her with a knife, but she closed the door by the Bar and his

knife stuck in the door, they soon after went away and we were released from our confinement. My Father returned home in an hour after their departure then it was I saw perhaps for the first time the evil passion of man get possession of him, he could scarcely be prevented by my mother from the folly of following them by himself, but she at length prevailed upon him to put on his uniform and collect his company, as there were too many of the Indians to be mastered by less than a dozen whites which she said he could soon collect. My Father accordingly set off on horseback in his (as I thought elegant) uniform, and in about two hours he again passed the house with 8 or 10 horsemen similarly dressed they were soon put on the trail by my Mother and away they went in pursuit of the Indians what became of the Indians I dont now remember, the impression however left on my mind is that they did not leave many of them to recount the adventures of their visit to our lonely dwelling which as well as I remember and from conversations with Genl Jackson and Judge Anderson the Comptroller must have been on the Holsten River at Campbells Station. Judge Anderson informed me that my Father was a Major in the Army with him, but did not know from which state but that he believed he was appointed in North Carolina. I know he was called Major by his old associates When Burn's difficulty occurred or when Louisianna was taken possession of M<sup>r</sup> Jefferson's Gun Boat system was put in operation my Father (who appears to have been something of a waterman) was appointed to the Command of one, No. 11, a schooner with the rank of Master, and my eldest brother had obtained a midshipman warrent and went to sea with him. Mounting four heavy guns, he was ordered immediately into service, and my mother was left to move the family down to New Orleans the next fall. By the direction of my Father a Keel Boat was built for us and our family floated down the river in it under the charge of a young man from Kentucky by the name of Merrill Brady; the next season in New Orleans was something like the present a most deadly yellow fever season and my mother fell a victim to it the children of whom there were five, were placed by my Father in different families to be brought up. It so happened that Com<sup>de</sup> Porters Father was on the same duty in New Orleans as my Father he was in wretched health and my father took him to his house, and my Mother nursed him as long as health permitted her, but it pleased the ruler of all things to take them both out of the world at the same time one by consumption, the other by yellow fever and they were both interred on the same day (so I have been told) for I was with the rest of the children removed from home and knew nothing of the sickness of my mother until she had been dead some time. Shortly after Com<sup>dre</sup> Porter arrived to take command of the station, and learning the particulars of his Fathers death, insisted upon taking one of my Fathers children to bring up, he had just married and had no children. My Father consented provided he could induce either of us to go with him which by degrees he did my sister and myself lived with the Com<sup>dre</sup> in New Orleans as long as he retained the station, and when he was releived I em-

barked with him and my sister remained with his sister who had married Dr Heap the Navy Surgeon of the station. From that time to the day of his death Com<sup>dre</sup> Porter was a father to me and I never saw my own father again. I was seven years old when I left home so that you see how little I could know of his life or character in fact all that I know I gathered from others. About 26 years ago while in Norfolk where I generally reside I received a message that there was a gentleman at the Hotel who wished to see me. I went down and an elderly gentleman introduced himself as the old and early friend of my Father and wished to see if I was "a sprig worthy of the Parent stock." It was Col M<sup>e</sup> Kee then a member of Congress from Alabama, he informed me that a M<sup>r</sup> Ogden, himself and my Father were the 3 first settlers of Tennessee, that they lived in a log cabin for some time (I dont remember how long) until my Father took it into his head that he would get married and that broke up their brotherhood he described my Father as belonging to Citadella in the island of Minorca (I am under the impression that my *grandfather* was from Citadella and *not* my Father but I may be wrong) he spoke of him as a man of great wrecklessness of character and just suited for the life of a Pioneer. I replied that he paid the forfeit of his wrecklessness life, that he had died of a cough contracted in that way when only 60 years of age at Pascagola in Mississippi, he had purchased a tract of land and located his family there. It was his habit to cross lake Pontchartrain in a small Boat and sleep on the Beach when night overtook him. I well remember his wrapping we children up in the boat sails on one of these trips only a short time before I left him. Yes said M<sup>e</sup> Kee that was just like him, he was just as much at home on the water as on the land, he was a glorious Indian hunter, and a great provider in great straights for food. I did not think to ask Col M<sup>e</sup> Kee to give me a little outline of what he knew of my Fathers life, and now deeply regret it. I have never been able to find any record of his services in the Army, altho Genl Jackson and Judge Anderson informed me that his appointment in the Navy was for his services in the Revolutionary War and the Judge told me he knew he was a Major at the same time he was he was called as if his name was spelt *Farragood*. I will write to my Brother who resides in New Orleans and perhaps he may know something that might be interesting. I left New Orleans with Com<sup>dre</sup> Porter in 1809 and did not return there until 1823 I then made my sister a visit of 8 or ten days I afterwards made them a visit of 2 weeks in 1838 so you see Sir how little I know of my Father or even my own family. I think he was born in 1755 and died at his residence at West Pascagoula in 1816 in his 61<sup>st</sup> year, he was in the battle of New Orleans but what part he bore I know not, I only know that if he had not borne an honorable part Genl Jackson would never have acknowledged him as a friend, or have been disposed to befriend his son as he ever did me. Thus Sir I have endeavored to give you all the little I know of my Father, and in so doing I have been compelled to give you a little of my own early history, and from that date up to the present

the Archives of the Navy dept contains my history which is but little more than a varied routine of cruizes on the stations in different parts of the world. "I have served (as the Tailor says in the Red Rover) in the seven bloody wars besides many others that have been talked of" and have thus far been preserved to the rank of a Commander in the Navy

With great respect

Your Obt Servant

D. G. FARRAGUT

P. S. This would have reached you sooner, but for mislaying of your letter, which deprived me of your address.

Respectfully

D. G. F.